

# Downtown Enhancement Plan

## THE ASHEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

*A Professional, Full-Service Agency*



*The Asheville Police Department is a Nationally Accredited Agency*

# Background

- ▣ During the months of July and August 2013, the Central Business District (CBD) saw a significant increase in crime as compared to the same period in 2012.
- ▣ Violent crime increased 52%.
- ▣ Property crime increased 34%.
- ▣ Complaints related to nuisance behaviors also increased.

# Action Step

APD implemented the “Downtown Enhancement Plan” to address increased criminal behavior.

- ▣ DTU took a more proactive enforcement approach through physical arrests, citations and additional staffing.
- ▣ The mission of the Downtown Unit remained one based on Community Oriented Policing; however, enforcement of criminal violations took precedent.

# Downtown Enhancement Plan

## Goal:

- ▣ Reduce crime and increase public safety.

## Pros:

- ▣ Increased law enforcement presence in the Central Business District.
- ▣ Reduction in crime and nuisance behavior in the Central Business District.

## Cons:

- ▣ None identified.

## Fiscal Impact:

- ▣ Cost of increased enforcement and APD presence was absorbed within the Police Department's existing budget.

# 90 Day Evaluation

The evaluation period of 09/08/13 – 12/07/13 was compared against the same time frame for 2012.

## Crime Statistics

- ▣ Robbery decreased by 22%
- ▣ Aggravated assault decreased by 36%
- ▣ Overall violent crime decreased by 24%
- ▣ Burglary decreased by 36%
- ▣ Overall property crime decreased by 23%

# 90 Day Evaluation cont...

- ▣ DTU officers issued 185 citations and made 249 arrests during the evaluation period.
- ▣ The DTU increased their business checks by 236%, increasing the number of self-initiated “check business” calls from 187 to 628.
- ▣ The DTU increased their crime prevention efforts by 77%, evaluating and acting on recognized issues in the CBD. Through self-initiation, crime prevention calls for service increased from 95 to 168.



# 2014 Update

Strategies currently utilized by the APD in an effort to continue to reduce criminal activity and improve public safety throughout the Central Business District of Asheville include:

- ▣ Homeless / Transient Outreach Program
  - Program designed to provide written outline of available resources and strategies to ensure these populations are made aware of the Police Department's strategy in dealing with criminal behavior.
  - Roll Call training (conducted in April 2014)
  - CIT training for all officers
  - Continued partnership with Resource Providers

# 2014 Update

- ▣ APD Policy on Homeless Persons
  - Purpose of directive is to outline standard operating procedures to be used in the interaction with homeless individuals, homeless camp protocols, and information on outreach assistance to social service resources.
  
- ▣ Ongoing Meetings with the ABC/ALE and Establishments Who Serve Alcohol
  - Most recent one held March 31, 2014, which included drug-induced sexual assault training.



# 2014 Update

- ▣ Volunteer Program at 29 Haywood Street
  - Hours are Wednesday – Friday from 12-4pm.
  - Duties: Greet walk-ins, answer phone, provide directions, provide information on community resources, contact district officers when needed for reports or other police related information.
- ▣ Street Entertainer Ordinance
  - Reviewing ordinance with the COA Legal Dept.
- ▣ Park Wardens
  - Looking at schedules, responsibilities, etc.

# 2014 Update

- ▣ Updated Shoplifter and Graffiti Guide
  - Includes prevention tips as well as reporting information.
- ▣ FTO Program
  - Trainees will now be assigned to the DTU during their field training phase.
- ▣ Safe Cam Initiative
  - Program that encourages business and property owners in the CBD to utilize their surveillance camera systems to make areas safer for shoppers and the community while providing a public service to the citizens of Asheville.
- ▣ Augment Schedule
  - Frequent review of current patrol schedule to ensure both efficiency, effectiveness, and proper manning .

# Summary

- ▣ The mission of the Downtown Unit will remain one based on Community Oriented Policing; however, enforcement of criminal violations will continue to take precedent.
- ▣ Continued enforcement will consist of proactive enforcement of criminal violations, which includes proactive arrests verses citations for repeated nuisance and alcohol related crimes.